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September 24, 2004

Miramar conducts Mass Casualty Drill

Story by Cpl. Jeff Zaccaro

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar conducted its annual Mass Casualty Drill Sept. 16 to evaluate both civilian and military emergency response units during a simulated on-base terrorist attack.

This year's events started with a bomb threat at the Gonzales Hall dining facility. The threat eventually turned into simulated reality when a mock car bomb was detonated around 8:30 a.m.

Upon detonation, first responders, both civilian and military, were notified and promptly arrived at the mess

According to Kevin Kelley, Miramar anti-terrorism program manager, the exercise is designed to mimic a real-life situation as much as possible, so dates, times and locations are kept confidential.

"This year we scheduled a no-notice exercise, and the planners came up with a different problem to solve than last year," he said. "The crews rolled on the scene with no advanced information and had to devise a plan to solve the scenario on scene."

Roughly 30 Marines, costumed in a variety of wounds, were scattered about on the softball field across from the mess hall in order to simulate the effects of such an attack. Once emergency response teams were on scene, they had to tag every casualty by the seriousness of their injuries, and then provide treatment accordingly.

Every move made by the emergency crews was evaluated on scene, and will later be analyzed to improve the responsiveness of emergency crews in case of a bona fide act of terrorism.

"During the exercise, we watch and document everything the first responders do. Later, we will prepare an after action report to assess any errors the crews made, and figure out what they can do better next time,"



An air station firefighter simulates the treatment of a wounded Marine during the air station's Mass Casualty Drill. During the drill, emergency crews had to simulate the treatment of roughly 30 mock casualties. Photo by Cpl. Jeff Zaccaro

said Staff Sgt. William Hammett, station safety specialaction report will also be used in planning next year's Mass Casualty Drill."

After the casualties had been marked for treatment, the emergency crews were thrown a curveball as a second bomb was detonated in the area, making the casualty evacuation point unsafe for unharmed personnel.

"Right now we are evacuating the treatment area until ist and Mass Casualty Drill safety observer. "The after it is safe to return," said William Pellegrini, emergency medical technician, Miramar One ambulance crew, in midst of the second bomb threat. "We had to leave all the patients behind because we could not afford to sustain anymore injuries."

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Warhorses named Heavy Squadron of the Year

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The Keith B. McCutcheon Award was recently presented to Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, at the 33rd Annual Marine Corps Aviation Banquet Sept. 18.

The award, more commonly known as the Heavy Helicoπpter Squadron of the Year Award, is given every year to a select squadron for their achievements in Marine Corps

With more than 36,000 mishap free hours, 4,300 Marines transported and approximately three and a half million pounds of gear transferred, HMH-465 stood out as the best squadron for the award.

In addition, the Warhorses deployed twice in the past year and a half, making them break down and rebuild eight aircraft in about two weeks.

"It is extremely rewarding that the Marines accomplished all of the assigned combat missions with excellence," said Lt. Col. 465. "There were no accidents, and all of the Marines returned safely."

After returning from the first Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Warhorses deployed to Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Okinawa, Japan, as part of the Unit Deployment Program in November and December of last year. They had a four-month work up after returning from Iraq to prepare to go overseas again.

The Warhorses had been in Japan fewer than two months when they received word

"It's really unheard of for a squadron to go out and do two deployments in one and a half years," said Cpl. Christopher L. Housman, central technician publications librarian clerk, HMH-465. "I'm really proud of what we did out there."

Their main mission overseas was to haul external and internal loads to forward operating bases, a mission in which the Warhorses excelled.

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Inside

Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station



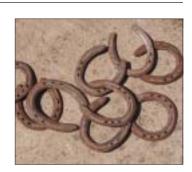


80°/62° Sunday

Raiders receive first Jseries KC-130 PAGE 7



Stables host annual Horsefest PAGE 9



Static electricity, gas do not mix

Compiled from the American Petroleum Institute latch on the nozzle open. and the Petroleum Equipment Institute.

School is starting again, the leaves in most places are starting to turn to bright hues and the gas pumps are beginning to become dangerous. What does this mean? In the fall and winter months, when the air is cool and dry, static electricity builds, causing possible fires at the pumps. These fires may occur when a vehicle experiences a static discharge at the fuel point, which causes a flash fire or small sustained fire with gasoline refueling vapors.

These types of static electricity-related fires have occurred at retail gas outlets and according to the American Petroleum Institute and the Petroleum Equipment Institute, these incidents are on the rise. To date, over 150 incidents have been reported, resulting in numerous injuries, property damage and one fatality. About 75 percent of the victims of these fires are women who tend to get back into the vehicle to get their purse or check on a child. Here are some tips to keeping you and your family safe at the pumps:

Turn off your vehicle engine while refueling. Put your vehicle in park or set the emergency brake. Turn off any auxiliary sources of ignition such as a camper or trailer heater, cooking units, or pilot lights.

Do not smoke, light matches or use lighters while refueling at the pump.

Use only the refueling latch provided on the gasoline dispenser nozzle never jam the refueling

Do not re-enter your vehicle during refueling. Motorists who feel the need to get back into their vehicle during refueling should discharge any static buildup upon exiting the car before going back to the pump by touching the metal on the ve-

hicle with a bare hand. Do not over fill or top off your vehicle tank, which can case gasoline spillage.

When dispensing gasoline into a container, use only an approved container and place it on the ground when refueling.

Containers should never be filled while inside the vehicle or its trunk, the bed of a truck or the floor of a trailer.

When filling a portable container, manually control the nozzle valve throughout the filling process. Fill it slowly to minimize spilling.

Fill container no more than 95 percent full to allow for expansion.

If gasoline spills on container, make sure that is has evaporated before you place the container in your vehicle and report all spills to attendant.

When transporting gasoline in a container, make sure it is secured against tipping and sliding, and never leave it in direct sunlight or in the trunk of a car.

In the unlikely event a static-caused fire occurs when refueling, leave the nozzle in the fill pipe, back away from the vehicle and notify the gas attendant.

And remember, turn off your cell phone when refueling.



Is this your Chevy?

The above vehicle is marked for impound by the Provost Marshal's Office. To avoid having the vehicle towed, please store it in the Marine Corps Community Services or Traffic Management Office lot. For more information, contact 577-1276 or 577-4150.

MiramarkS

"What is the most foolish thing you have seen while pumping gas?



LANCE CPL. TODD REIFSNYDER MALS-11

"I see a lot of people talking on their cellphones. Once I saw someone spill gas all over themselves."



"I saw someone using an air pump flick a cigarette toward the gas pumps."



LANCE CPL. VICTOR MONROY Airframes Mechanic VMFAT-101

"I saw someone drive off with the handle stuck in tank."

Navy Marine Corps News takes on new, modern programming

Story by Navy News Service

WASHINGTON — Navy Marine Corps News will bring its new look to Direct to Sailor, Armed Forces Radio and Television Service, and the Pentagon Channel, Sept. 24.

From the Naval Media Center's "Pier 168" in Washington, D.C., the new show will unveil a look that captures the energy of the Navy and Marine Corps team at work in a more dramatic and modern setting.

"The goal is still to present news of the Navy and Marine Corps Team to the Navy/Marine Corps Team and their families, but in a manner that more closely resembles the commercial broadcast standards seen in civilian media," said Chief of Navy Information Rear Adm. T. McCreary.

"We have changed our programming to engage the E-3 to O-3 Sailor and Marine," said Andrew Miller, producer/director of NMCN. "So, the show's new look will represent our audience using elements like the ones found in MTV, FOX Sports and Access Hollywood."

The content of Navy Marine Corps News will also change with the addition of "News You Can Use," a one minute news block of useful information for Sailors and Marines, such as quality of life and career enhancement tidbits. "News You Can Use" will replace the current news segment.

To view the current edition of Navy Marine Corps News, visit www.news.navy.mil/management/ *videodb/player/video.aspx?cat=2*.





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Maj. Curtis Hill

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Gunnery Sgt. Barry L. Pawelek Public Affairs Chief Staff Sgt. Chad McMeen Internal Chief Cpl. Jeff Zaccaro

Layout and Design Combat Correspondents Staff Sgt. Maria C. Brookman

Sgt. C. Nuntavong Sgt. Richard J. Kulleck Sgt. Joshua A. Stueve Sgt J.L. Zimmer III Sgt. Kristen L. Tull Sgt. Cecilia Sequeira Cpl. T.D. Smith Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

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Mud Run to kick off Toys for Tots season



Marines and civilians quickly realize it will take teamwork to negotiate the giant wall during the final stretch of the 10-kilometer Volkslauf Mud Run in Bakersfield, Calif., in 2002. Photo by Staff Sgt. Sergio Jimenez

Story by Staff Sgt. Sergio Jimenez

Los Angeles Public Affairs

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. — The Marine Corps League, in collaboration with Marines and the city of Bakersfield, will kick off the Kern County Toys for Tots season with the eighth running of the Volkslauf Mud Run, "The Ultimate Challenge," here, Oct 16.

According to 1stSgt. Robert W. Breeden, company first sergeant, Inspector & Instructor Staff, 6th Engineer Support Battalion, the purpose of the event is to not only challenge Marines and civilians in what he calls "one of the toughest mud runs in the world," but to raise

money for a worthy cause during the holiday season.

Breeden said all proceeds from the event will go toward Marine family programs and the Kern County Toys for Tots program.

Volkslauf organizers are expecting over 1000 runners and over 3000 spectators to attend what some have called, "a grueling test of individual physical and mental endurance."

Participants will have to slog and slosh through five million gallons of water, mud and over 50 obstacles during the 10-kilometer course. Runners will have to cross hurdles and berms, low-crawl through tunnels and pits, climb ladders and ad-

vance over swings and rope climbs.

"There is no tougher mud run," said Breeden. "Those who race are guaranteed to walk away a little sore, a little bruised, but very satisfied in their accomplishment," he said.

But what the run takes from the community in cuts, bruises, sweat and tears, it also gives back.

According to Breeden, last year the Marine Corps League raised over \$12,000 for Toys for Tots and other programs, and over the course of eight years, the run has provided thousands of dollars for the community.

This run is not about raising money or a physical challenge. However, it is a

way to bring the community together, said Breeden.

"It's true purpose is to strengthen the bond between the military and the community," said Breeden. "The run allows the community to get an up-close look at who we are and what we do for our nation," said Breeden.

Participants and spectators will be able to speak to Marines and view static displays provided by various Southern California Marine Reserve Centers and active duty units from Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Some of the items scheduled to be available for display include, but are not limited to: an Abrams Tank, light-armored vehicles, infantry weapons systems and a 155mm howitzer. Aviation assets on display will include CH-53E Super Stallion, CH-46E Sea Knight, UH-1N Huey and AH-1W Super Cobra helicopters. Engineer equipment will include an Amphibious Assault Fuel System (pushing lots of water for the course) as well as heavy equipment and vehicles.

R. Lee Ermey is scheduled to serve as the guest of honor in kicking off the season and race.

The cost to race is \$35-45 for individuals and \$140-\$180 per team, depending on when and how individuals or teams register.

For more information or to register, visit www.volkslauf.com, or contact Sheena Crider at scrider@volkslauf.com or the Marine Corps Reserve at (661) 325-2797.

Marines capture known terrorist insurgent

Story by Cpl. Matthew R. Jones

1st MARDIV Combat Correspondent

AL QAIM, Iraq — Leaving the base shortly after midnight, Marines drove through the quiet desert of Iraq to a secured location. There, they began to patrol through the city of Al Qaim on foot.

The Marines from Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, conducted a patrol through the city in the early morning hours of Sept. 10, capturing a valued insurgent target.

Accompanying the Marines from Co. C were Marines from 3rd Battalion, 7th

Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, who have been operating in the area for the last seven months.

"The 3/7 Marines know the area well and know how to navigate the area in a tactful manner," said Cpl. Matt C. Michel, 20, a native of Morgan City, La., and a team leader from 1/7.

With the experience of 3/7 to assist them, the Marines were ready to complete their assigned tasks.

"My team's mission was to set up the observation posts covering the area around the house," said Michel. "The other team actually conducted the search

for the targets."

With the security in position, the Marines cordoned off and breached an entrance into the house.

Inside the house, the Marines detained three adult males, one being a high-value target, and began to search the house. A shop with equipment to make false identification cards and materials for improvised explosive devices was also found inside.

After the search was complete and the detainees were in custody, the Marines called for the vehicle convoy to come and pick them up

"The mission was a success. The highvalue target was detained and there were no causalities," said Cpl. Todd A. Gaines, 27, team leader and native of Evansville, Ind.

In addition to teamwork used during this dangerous mission, the Marines helped remove one more terrorist from the streets of Iraq

"I am glad that we were able to get out and complete our mission. It really makes being out here easier when there is a positive outcome," said Lance Cpl. Rick. N. Santini, 20, a rifleman and native of Port Jervis, N.J.

Inn goes under construction

Story by Cpl. T.D. Smith

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Official groundbreaking is set to take place sometime after the air show, but work is already underway to improve the Miramar Inn. The Naval Facilities Engineering Command awarded a \$5.2 million contract to Harper Construction Company for the development.

The improvement and expansion project is needed to facilitate the high volume the inn hosts. "The Miramar Inn annual occupancy rate is 15 percent higher than hotels in San Diego," said Rick Snee, manager, Miramar Inn.

These past few months have been especially busy for the temporary lodging facility, Snee continued. "We have really catered, this summer, to the families who have deploying or returning servicemembers."

The construction includes the addition of 52 rooms. Six of the rooms are planned to be two-bedroom suites and are anticipated to better facilitate families in the process of permanently changing station.

"Our mission, (and intent with the improvements) is to facilitate the needs of PCS families and the quality of life. The addition of the two-bedroom suites will help with that," said Snee.

Some of the improvements to the rooms and property include a hot tub, courtyard patio, a playground and high speed Internet for the rooms.

"The rooms are going to be similar to a Marriott Courtyard or Marriott Residence," Snee added.

The suites will also feature a breakfast room. The laundry room will be enlarged and a business center will be erected. The completion is projected for January 2005.

Also, the Inn was a recent recipient of the Marine Corps Food and Hospitality Excellence Award. The award was presented at the Marine Corps Community Service annual training conference.

"The Excellence Award Program adopts quality management principles by encouraging all activities to achieve excellence, rather than having winners and losers. We are especially proud this year to honor our activities that have achieved excellence and continue to provide a valuable service for our Marines and their family members during deployments," said Carol Garland, head of the Marine Corps Food and Hospitality Operations branch.

The Miramar Inn received the award after MCCS Miramar submitted a recommendation to Headquarters Marine Corps, who then sent out a team to grant points to the facility. The awards were then given to organizations that excelled in employee performance, customer service and financial success.

"This is the first year Miramar has received such an award," said Irma Malabanan, marketing director, MCCS. She continued, "The point system promotes teamwork in achieving excellence."

Even before the groundbreaking, the Miramar Inn is award-winning. "With the improvements, the Inn will be prepared to better serve customers," said Malabanan.

Marriage in the Corps

Waiting until you're out to tie the knot may be better

"40 percent of people who

marry under the age of 20 will

eventually divorce"

Commentary by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

More than 60 percent of first-term marriages in the military fail, according to Navy Capt. John S. Lineback, chaplain, Marine Air Ground Combat Training Center, 29 Palms, Calif., and that number continues to grow each day.

Marriage should be a declaration of love, not a contract so you can receive more money and move out of the barracks. Even if you think that special someone is "the one," I urge you to at least get to know your future mate longer than a couple of

months before affirming that love.

Maybe this is the problem: Perhaps people go into marriage with the mental-

ity of "Hey, if this doesn't work out, there's always divorce," or, "It won't happen to me."

Divorce seems so easy nowadays. In fact, according to recent statistics from Divorce Magazine, 40 percent of people who marry under the age of 20 will eventually divorce.

Many people change their opinions and views as they grow older, and their beliefs can change as the years pass by. If you marry young, both people involved can transform and outgrow one another.

According to psychologist Eric Erickson, everyone goes through eight psychological stages in life. In stage six, the young adulthood stage, individuals age 19 through 40 face the crisis of "intimacy versus isolation"

Erickson states you are not developmentally complete until you are capable of intimacy.

A lot of people are either afraid of forming close relationships or scared they will not find their soul mate, and marry the first person they are in lust with.

At my military occupational specialty school, there was a Marine who I went out with a couple of times. When I left for the fleet, I found out he was marrying another girl at the school, after knowing her for two months. Both of them declared they were "meant for each other." They were both under 20 years of age.

According to Divorce Magazine, only 24 percent of people who marry over the age of 25 will eventually get divorced. So it might be beneficial to wait until you find your own identity before sharing it with someone else.

I think I have found myself, but I constantly change my opinions and views on everything. I have met a few people who have shared my interests. But who knows, I might

change my mind in five years.

So if regular ol' relationships can't last even a few months, what makes people think they can survive marriage?

I don't mean to be a pessimist, but if you are thinking "my partner and I won't become part of that statistic," think again.

Honestly, if you are in a relationship, are things going as well as you have expected them to? Do you remember those previous partnerships? Do you remember how everything your partner did was just so charming, and then later down the road, the way they twisted pasta on their fork annoyed you?

> I think a lot of people do not give marriage any thought. Why not get to know your supposed soul mate before you

Divorce Magazine suppose mate he

make the biggest commitment of all? Now, I can understand when you find your lobster out of a sea of goldfish and you do not want to be separated from one another.

But think about it. If it was really meant to be, separation or distance will not make a difference. If love conquers all, your "soul mate" will be there, waiting for you. If not, it was not destined to be. So, you simply move on and find someone better. You don't see college students marrying the first person they think is hot.

Now, about contract marriages you know where two people marry each other to get off base and get a heftier paycheck? Yeah, the benefits may seem great, but the joining of two people is not meant for materialism

Also, keep in mind, if you want to get a little action outside of your marriage, it is punishable under Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, which states, if a person has sexual intercourse with someone other than his or her spouse, they have committed adultery.

Article 134 also states that, "a marriage exists until it is dissolved in accordance with the laws of a competent state or foreign jurisdiction."

So, what happens when you have to waste your time filing for divorce and dividing up your assets? Or do you plan on staying with a person you don't even love for the rest of your life? Either way, you end up losing.

Wouldn't you rather wait, marry once and not have to deal with the pains of divorce in the future?

So I urge you, when you meet your "lobster," get to know them a little longer before jumping into such a big commitment. This way, you can avoid sinking to the bottom of the sea in the future. Flight Jacket September 24, 2004

33rd Annual MCAA Banquet honors Marine aviators

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

As Gen. Michael W. Hagee spoke at the Marine Corps Aviation Association banquet Sept 18, all fell silent, grasping his every word.

"I would like every Marine aviator, active and reserve to stand up, so we can thank them for what they have done," stated Hagee, the commandant of the Marine Corps, as audience members cheered.

The MCAA banquet was held at the Town and Country Convention Center in San Diego to honor select aviation units and individuals.

"Our aviators help bring a unique capability to the Marine Corps Air Ground Task Force," said the assistant commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. William L. Nyland. "It is important to take the opportunity to recognize Marines for what they do, because they make it all happen."

The banquet commenced at 7:00 p.m., with Col. Earl Wederbrook, commanding officer, Marine Aircraft Group 11, hosting the ceremony.

Wederbrook announced the arrival of Hagee and Gen. John R. Dailey, the national commander of the MCAA.

After the two generals marched to the front of the ballroom, the MAG-11 Color Guard presented the colors to the music of the Marine Band San Diego.

After the posting of the colors, Dailey introduced the distinguished guests, who included Nyland, the sergeant major of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. John L. Estrada and Sen. John Glenn, the first recipient of an MCAA award.

The commandant then proceeded to speak about his thoughts on Marine Corps aviation.

"Marine Corps aviation has done a lot to support our mission by projecting sustained combat power ashore, and nobody does it better than Marines. I thank you for what you do," said Hagee in his speech.

Shortly after Hagee's speech, the awards were presented to units and individuals for their accomplishments in Marine Corps aviation.

"This year, the uncommon devotion to duty, demonstrated by both individual Marines and aviation units made the selection process for 2004 exceptionally difficult," Wederbrook said to the audience. "You will hear citations read which reflect the honor, courage and commitment displayed by the award recipients."

Hagee and Estrada then came up to the stage to hand out the awards.

Units from Miramar recognized for squadron of the year awards included Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, and Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352.

Miramar Marines receiving awards, which ranged from the Marine Enlisted Aircrewman of the Year to the Marine Aviation Command and Control Officer of the Year, included Maj. Lorna M. Mahlock, Maj. Charles B. Dockery, Gysgt. Marvin M. Magcale, and Staff Sgt. Wade M. Davis.

"It feels great to be recognized, but at the same time I am thinking about all of the people I have worked with who made all of this possible," said Magcale, airframes divisions chief, HMH-465, and individual award recipient. "This was my first MCAA banquet, and I hope I can go to the next one. The MCAA is a great organization that increases motivation throughout the Marine Corps."

Although only a few awards were handed out at the banquet, Nyland felt that all Marines like Magcale deserved to be recognized for their efforts in Marine Corps aviation.

"Marines like these aviators are magnificent young people," added Nyland, the most senior aviator in the Marine Corps. "We are very blessed to have them all contributing to this great effort."



Awards await presentation at the Marine Corps Aviation Association Banquet Sept. 18. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones*

MCD continued from page 1

Pellegrini said that once the casualties were stabilized, they would be transported to one of three different hospitals by means of seven on-scene civilian ambulances.

The interaction between civilian and military personnel was beneficial to all parties concerned, according to Master Sgt. Michael Kidd, Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting noncommissioned officerin-charge and Mass Casualty Drill observer.

"It is important for everyone to identify things they could be doing better," he said. "In a real situation, we would have to function as a team to get everything that needed to be done, done."

Although the exercise was designed to evaluate teamwork, response time and effectiveness, it instilled a sense of the imminence of danger.

"Before 9/11 and the war in Iraq, you would hardly ever hear about terrorism or car bombs, but that is just the world we live in today," said Lance Cpl. Danny Kemp, education assistant, Education Assistance Office, Headquar-



A simulated casualty lays wounded on the ground while emergency response crewmembers attend to other wounded Marines during the air station's Mass Casualty Drill. *Photo by Staff Sgt. Chad McMeen*

ters and Headquarters Squadron, and simulated casualty. "It is good to get out and actually practice this stuff. It makes you appreciate how much our military and nation prepare for these kinds of incidents."



Two Marine CH-46 helicopters fly over Al Asad and the rusted carcass of a Soviet-made Iraqi MiG-25 Foxbat now lying in one of the base's junyards Sept. 11. Scores of Iraqi MiGs are scattered across the airbase that is now the temporary home to 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing squadrons. *Photos by Cpl. Paul Leicht*

Iraqi MiGs pass torch to Marines' fighter aircraft

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MWHS-3 Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq — The second largest airbase in Iraq, Al Asad, is located approximately 115 miles northwest of Baghdad and slightly west of the Euphrates River. Some might say that it is a vast and featureless relic of Saddam Hussein's Iraqi militarium.

The base was at one time the home to several fighter squadrons, the bulk of the Iraqi Air Force. After coalition forces captured the base in April 2003, scores of Soviet-made Iraqi Air Force MiG aircraft were discovered.

Abandoned, hidden under camouflage and in some cases, in flight condition, the Iraqi MiGs remain a unique feature of the airbase here.

"Most of the MiGs (aboard Al Asad) the Iraqis acquired from the (former) Soviet Union," said Gunnery Sgt. Creston P. Bailey, air analysis chief, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. "The Iraqi Air Force played a major role during the Iraq-Iran War in the

"At one time, Iraq had the largest air force in the Middle East," continued the Houston native. "By the time of the first Gulf War, Iraq had almost 1,000 combat aircraft."

Al Asad, like other military airbases across Iraq, has numerous hardened shelters and hangars with multiple runways and taxiways, patterned after their Russian counterparts.

"The Iraqis basically patterned their

airbases and fighter tactics on the Soviet model," explained the 32-year-old Bailey. "Most of the (installation) construction was done by Yugoslavian contractors."

"By Iraqi standards, Al Asad is a pretty advanced base and when coalition forces captured the base (during Operation Iraqi Freedom), most of the MiGs were scattered _ all over the base to better protect

he added.

It is unclear however, why the MiGs mostly MiG-21 "Fishbeds" and MiG-25 "Foxbats" were moved, buried in the sand, or disassembled somewhat haphazardly.

them from allied air strikes,"

Lying discarded like scraps of garbage at the side of the road, the lifeless vestiges of the Iraqi Air Force break up the barren landscape of Al Asad. Occasion-

ally, one can find an engine of a MiG-25 Foxbat, considered to be the fastest fighter aircraft ever produced, being used as a roadblock.

Swept aside, the trashed MiGs exist in harsh contrast to the Marines' F/A-18 Hornets and AV-8B Harriers flying above them, who have now taken up the

role of protector for the Iraqi people.

"It is definitely a unique opportunity to operate out of a captured Iraqi airbase, especially the one that was the equivalent of their Top Gun Fighter Weapons School," said Lt. Col. Kevin M. Iiams, commanding officer, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (All Weather) 242.

"Seeing the MiGs is a stark reminder of where we are and what has happened to get us here."

Raiders' new KC-130 J brings changes to aviation

Story by Sgt. Cecilia Sequeira

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352, "The Raiders," accepted Miramar's first KC-130 J aircraft from the manufacturer, Lockheed Martin Aerospace Monday.

The technologically advanced J model "marks the beginning of a transition for the Raiders into a new era of automated aviation," said Raiders commanding officer Lt. Col. Albert T. Conord

VMGR-352 isn't the only squadron making the change. Eventually, all active duty Marine squadrons will make the change to the J models. Reservists will use the KC-130 T models.

Originally, the Air Force was going to train the Marine Corps on the new model, but the Marine Corps leaped ahead of them in training. "That makes us the tip of the spear. We can't look back and learn from others' mistakes. We have to make our own," said VMGR-352 loadmaster Staff Sgt. Lee A. Sweaney. The Air Force is now scheduled to take over training for the Marine Corps in spring of 2006.

For the aircrew, it won't be just a matter of getting accustomed to a new aircraft. Pilots, loadmasters and crew chiefs will have to go to Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina, for two to three months of classroom and simulator training. After the schooling, the aircrew will then need another three months of practice flying the J model before they are considered proficient.

So much training is necessary because the J model is very different from its older counterparts. Raiders KC-130 J instructor pilot, Capt. Jason W. Julian, says the J model has more advanced defense systems that provide better protection against enemy missile systems.

The navigation capabilities of the aircraft replace the need for Marine Corps enlisted KC-130 navigators, whom are only needed on remaining old aircrafts, until J models take over completely.

The new six-bladed propellers and engines have more thrust

and use less fuel. The aircraft will be able to travel faster, farther and carry more than its predecessors.

Raiders crew chief Gunnery Sgt. Richard L. England said, sometimes with the old models it is difficult to locate a problem. "If something is wrong on the new aircraft, it jumps out at you," he said.

"We are fully night vision compatible. The R and F models only had white lighting. (If you are wearing NVG's) and you are trying to look out and you have white lights on, it glares out the windows," said Sweaney.

However, the sacrifice in manpower is not completely replaced by the increase in technology. "As with any

transition, it is full of obstacles and challenges that the Marines are going to have to overcome. Some of those challenges are the increased workload on the (remaining) aircrew and an increased training requirement for them," said Julian.

"The problems the aircraft has with computer technology are new for us. It has software glitches that create a new challenge for us," said England. "The intent was to have the aircraft computer take the place of extra people. Now, the pilots work harder because they don't have the navigators for mission planning," he said.

With all the upcoming training and the loss of the navigators, some crew may not welcome the change. "There is a lot of negativity associated with change. People have spent their



The Raiders celebrated the arrival of their new aircraft, the KC-130 J, Monday during a cermony on the flight line. *Photo by Sgt. Cecilia Sequeira*

entire career becoming subject matter experts on a plane. Then you come in and say, 'You have to start all over on a new airplane.' That is tough," added Julian.

After all crewmembers are trained and become accustomed to the aircraft, the J model will still demand more time. "Even with the proficiency increase, overall, KC-130 J crews, will have more tasking. It is not unusual for pilots to spend an entire day prior to a mission in the mission planning room. The during-flight workload is also higher for all crew," said Julian.

"The Marines are going to adapt and make this plane successful. They will find ways to overcome any shortcomings," Julian added.

Eleven additional KC-130 J models will replace the rest of the old Raiders' F and R models by late 2007.





Airframes mechanics with Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 at Al Taqaddum, Iraq, perform a pre-flight inspection on a Pioneer UAV before mission take off Sept. 17. The airframes mechanics are the last Marines to touch the Pioneer before the UAV is launched. *Photo by Cpl. Paul Leicht*

Pioneers get 'birds eye' view of Iraqi combat zone

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MWSH-3 Combat Correspondent

AL TAQADDUM, Iraq — The fog of war clouding the modern battlefield is getting a whole lot thinner.

Marines fighting an insurgency through the maze-like streets of Iraqi cities like Ar Ramadi and Fallujah are finding the enemy more easily thanks to Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, Marine Air Control Group 38, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

VMU-1 supports coalition forces in Iraq with the remote-controlled, unmanned aerial vehicle system known as Pioneer. Unlike the larger Predator UAV flown by other services, the Marines' more tactical Pioneer is armed only with sophisticated camera equipment.

"The Pioneer UAV is an excellent tool with great potential for changing the way we fight the enemy," said Gunnery Sgt.
Robert W. Wilson, external pilot, VMU-1.
"Without putting additional lives at risk, day or night, we provide a unique overhead view for tactical commanders with imagery intelligence to help them make battlefield decisions and save Marines' lives."

Wilson, a former infantryman, said ground commanders routinely tell VMU-1 how grateful they are for what they provide in terms of aerial surveillance, intelligence and reconnaissance.

Whether from an airstrip, dirt runway or the back of a truck — with the help of a pneumatic launcher — the Pioneer can quickly be set aloft above the enemy.

"Within a few hours of being here we were fully operational," said Sgt. Maj. Patrick A. Prose, sergeant major, VMU-1 and Shakopee, Minn., native, "sometimes even faster than that, if the situation requires."

"If we get a call, we can get a (UAV) in the air within 20 minutes," he added. "We even have our own motor transport section that facilitates our exceptional mobility and tactical capabilities."

Maintaining a high state of readiness has kept the 'Watchdogs' busy.

"If we do not get our job done, then the mission does not get done," said 1st Lt. Jose A. Nicolas, aircraft maintenance officer, VMU-1 and native of Houston. "Under normal training conditions we sustain 200 to 250 flight hours per year. So far we have averaged between 460 to 500 hours per month out here, or 16 to 20 hours per day. We have been working very hard to keep our readiness high."

If a maintenance problem arises, the squadron has two civilian technical representatives on hand to help identify and solve any technical issue.

"We try and solve whatever problems arise, but if we need to 'send out the bat signal,' they can help us figure it out," Nicolas said.

VMU-1, while not as large as other aerial squadrons, is a tight-knit unit uniquely focused on its mission and impact on the battlefield below.

Working as a team, maintenance technicians, plane captains and pilots launch Pioneers to get them in the air and into the fight. Once the external pilot flies the UAV to a predetermined altitude and location for a mission, internal pilots within the unit's command center take over.

Then the fun begins.

"It's pretty cool, we get to spy on and zoom in on the enemy, even from 3,000 feet," said 20-year-old Cpl. Ryan Rogers, internal pilot, VMU-1, from Detroit.

Keeping constant tabs on the enemy out of reach and out of sight gives the squadron a unique perspective and an appreciation for their hard work.

"Everyday out here we see the positive effect we have," said Lance Cpl. Robert

Annual Horsefest brings families a romping good time

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The third annual Horsefest featured an abundance of activities for servicemembers, their families, and civilians to enjoy at the Miramar Stables, Sept. 18.

Horsefest gave an opportunity to more than 500 people to partake in a free activity, while affording them the chance to spend time together, get up close and personal with the horses and view exciting shows and exhibits.

"This event is honoring the military. It lets servicemembers know what is available to them," said Martha Torkington, a rider and third-time participant in Horsefest. "It is just another perk and facility they can take advantage of."

The opening ceremonies featured the Coronado High School Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps unit, Flying Hooves Riding Club mounted flag bearers and a performance of the national anthem sung by Bryson Jones.

A parade of breeds commenced shortly after, in which owners showed off their horses, giving the audience a glimpse of the many varieties of the animal, from the Mustang to the Appaloosa.

Spectators were then exposed to back-toback riding demonstrations in the main arena. The exhibitions showcased everything the many breeds of horses are capable of

One performance featured six girls in poodle skirts who rode to the classic song, "Hand Jive." Another show displayed various costumes associated with each horse.

Other shows included barrel racing, reining, vaulting and jumping demonstrations and a special performance by the Chula Vista Mounted Police Volunteers, who demonstrated their use of horses in emergency situations by rescuing a simulated victim.

"A lot of the different things the performers are doing are represented at the stables," explained Moriah McAlexander, Horsefest chairman. "The performers are showing guests what they have an opportunity to do as well."

Visitors also had a chance to enjoy other activities and displays located throughout the

Children could watch their name get imprinted on their very own horseshoe, take a picture on a horse, get their faces painted and ride a pony, among other activities.

"My kids don't have an opportunity to see horses on a daily basis," mentioned Sgt. Juan Jimenez, administration clerk, Reserve Support Unit. "I want to expose them to things other than the television."

Even guests without children had a great time

T've always loved horses, but I never come out to the stables," explained 1st Lt. Josh McKeighan, an F/A-18 weapons sensor officer, Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. "Now I plan on coming more often. It is a good recreational activity."

Marines and visitors like McKeighan had an opportunity to visit various booths that educated them on horse care, show techniques, search and rescue horses and other

informative horse knowledge.

"Without the sponsors, these activities would not be possible," said McAlexander, a Tustin, Calif., native. "Also, this event would not have happened if it wasn't for the volunteers who donated their time and efforts, like the JROTC cadets, performers and Flying Hooves Riding Club."

The next Horsefest is scheduled for next year, but servicemembers and family members can use and visit the stables throughout the year.

"You should definitely take advantage of everything the base has to offer," said McKeighan, a Salem, N.Y., native. "If you don't, they're going to go away."

For more information on the Miramar Stables, call 577-4139.



Martha Torkington performs in the reining portion of the show at the third annual Horsefest Sept. 18. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

Marines experience Grand Canyon through SMP

Story by Cpl. T.D. Smith

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Folklore has it, Pecos Bill, a legendary cowboy who could ride anything, accidentally created the Grand Canyon when he wrangled a tornado, used a snake as a lasso and rode the cyclone through Arizona.

The Marines who ventured on the Single Marine Program's Grand Canyon weekend didn't arrive at the national park's campsite riding on the back of a twister-they carpooled in a van, and recently set out for some fun at one of the seven natural wonders of the world.

It was early, and the sun had not come up yet, but a handful of nature-enthusiast Marines packed up, checked and rechecked the vehicle to ensure they had everything for their 540-mile journey to

Mather Campground at the south rim of Grand Canyon National Park.

One of the many attractions the Grand Canyon holds is the view at dusk. "The sunset at the canyon was spectacular. The view from the rim was just phenomenal. You could see the skyline and the deep, full purples, brilliant golds and reds. The colors were awesome," said Cpl. Margaret Collins, engine mechanic, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

Others enjoyed the views of the weather and the starry nights. "My favorite part about the trip was the stars. Being from a big city, I've never seen stars as clear as that in my entire life. The view at the Grand Canyon was amazing," said Lance Cpl. Victoria Hackel, personnel clerk, MAG-16.

"Watching the storms roll in at sunset was another great part of the trip. Just watching the lightening and the people get all excited trying to take a picture of it all was fun," Hackel continued.

The views may be a spectacular draw for civilian tourists and Marines alike, but the lessons learned in safety may also be beneficial and entertaining. A store at the Grand Canyon Village documents the many hazards present at the 4,000 footdeep gorge.

"I read about how tourists try to get great photos at the edge of the Grand Canyon's cliff and end up falling to their death," said Cpl. Karen Rudolph, communications and navigation technician, Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 121, MAG-11, 3rd MAW, "And then you have those (who) have strokes or heart attacks while hiking the canyon or dying of dehydration. It really makes you think about how important it is to consume a lot of liquids. We made sure that we consumed a lot of liquids on this trip."

The Marines were also courteous to the local critters of the massive ravine. Several members of the party fed the wildlife and were interested in the well-being of their newfound friends.

"And, of course, there were our buddies the squirrels. Who can forget them? They were eating right out of our hands," said Collins. "Seeing the elk up close, really up close, was kind of scary and cool at the same time. I was surprised how much wildlife was around."

The SMP coordinates such events to allow servicemembers safe, fun and inexpensive experiences while affording them the opportunity to interact with Marines from different military and social backgrounds.

"I really enjoyed meeting Marines from other (military occupational specialties) and shops. There are a lot of great people here (on the trip) and I usually only end up hanging out with the people I see at work or around my barracks," said Collins. "Also, I got to learn about their jobs, lives and deployments, etc., which was interesting. I got a better view of the big Marine Corps picture through hanging out with folks I usually don't."



Cpl. Margaret Collins, engine mechanic, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, gazes into the abyss of the Grand Canyon. *Photo by Cpl. T.D. Smith*

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However, one of HMH-465's most significant accomplishments overseas was breaking down eight CH-53E helicopters in Japan for transport on a C-5 to Iraq. Once the aircraft arrived in Iraq, the squadron rebuilt the helicopters in approximately 14 days.

"It took a lot of hard work to put the aircraft back together, but everybody did their part to get the job done quicker," mentioned Cpl. Christopher Sayson, CH-53E avionics technician, HMH-465. "All of the shops did everybody else's job to get the task done. We all pulled together out there."

Part of the reason the Warhorses were able to do what was asked of them and beyond is the camaraderie within the squadron.

"The Marines in this squadron are a very tight-knit group and we all get along so

well," explained Lance Cpl. Anthony D. Cullum, ground support equipment technician, HMH-465. "I attribute a lot of that closeness to the deployments."

The Warhorses deployed, came back home and did it all over again, with minimal time to prepare.

"It's been an absolute privilege for me to work with a lot of great Americans," said Zoretic. "The Marines have put in a tremendous amount of work and they deserve this award."

According to Cullum, receiving the award was an honor in itself, but just being part of the squadron is the biggest reward.

"I am proud to be a part of this squadron and I am proud to work with these great Marines," said Cullum. "This award is just proof of all of our hard work."

The squadron will be deploying to OIF III in February.

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Daniels, intelligence analyst, VMU-1, and 19 year-old native of Dallas. "We help Marines on the ground so they have a better picture of the battlefield."

"We observe (insurgents) setting up ambushes and moving weapons, or help assess targets before and after a strike," Daniels continued. "If the ground commanders want us to direct or adjust artillery fire or close air support we can do that. We can direct any payload to any target.

VMU-1's imagery and intelligence analysts are in constant communication with their own internal pilots and commanders by means of radio and text-based computer communication.

"It is sort of like a real-time, instantmessaging chat room," said 29-year-old Sgt. Matthew Carnejo, imagery analyst, VMU-1, and a native of Bay City, Mich. "We talk back and forth constantly during each mission. Just knowing that everyday we are saving the lives of other Marines is the best feeling in the world."

Miramar Movies

The Station Auditorium is located in building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies free of charge. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information, contact 577-4143 or log on to www.mccsmiramar.com.

Today:

4:30 p.m. Yu-Gi-Oh! (PG) 6:30 p.m. Alien vs. Predator (PG-13) 8:30 p.m. The Village (PG-13)

Saturday:

6:30 p.m. Princess Diaries 2 (G) 8:45 p.m. Little Black Book (PG-13)

Sunday:

1 p.m. Thunderbirds (PG) 6:30 p.m. The Manchurian Candidate (R)

Wednesday:

6:30 p.m. Open Water (R)

Thursday:

2 p.m. Yu-Gi-Oh! (PG) 6:30 p.m. Princess Diaries 2 (G)

Presentations and time subject to change.

Recruiter's Assisstance

Recruiting Station Orange County is looking for motivated Marines in the ranks of private through sergeant to return home and help recruiting efforts during the November and December holiday seasons.

TAD orders can be issued for Recruiter's Assisstance for up to 30 days. Interested Marines should inform their section, then call Gunnery Sgt. Engelhardt at (649) 261-2049.

Religious Services

The Chaplain's Office is located in building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain's Office at 577-1333.

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service 11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist **Wednesday:**

7 p.m. Baptist service

Monday-Friday: 11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic daily mass

7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD 7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

3rd MAW OIF book

Marine Corps Association bookstores will soon carry an exclusive new title detailing the exploits of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Third Marine Aircraft Wing: Operation Iraqi Freedom" follows the journey of 3rd MAW in support of I Marine Expeditionary Force and coalition forces in liberating Iraq and toppling Saddam Hussein during OIF. The book is a testament to the Marines' well-proven, colorful battle history.

The cost of the book is \$34 for members and \$36 for non-members.

Marines can visit the MCA Bookstore located at Camp Pendleton's Main Exchange, Building T1100 on Vandegrift Ave., or call 888-237-7683 to order a copy.

Enlisted golf tourney

An All-Enlisted Fleet Week Golf Tournament will be held Oct. 4. Registration will be from 10-11:30 a.m. for \$20 a team, and games will begin at noon.

The tournament will be held at Admiral Baker Golf Course, and the paygrade of the team, when added, cannot equal more than 21.

For more information, contact Gunnery Sgt. Romero at 577-1152 or at the Squadron Gunnery Sergeant Office in building 8380.

MAC Flight

A Military Airlift Command flight will be available to Quantico, Va., Oct. 31 for the Marine Corps Marathon. For more information, call 577-7700.

Impounded Vehicles

The following vehicles have been impounded and need to be claimed by the owners. Towing fees average \$113, storage fees \$28 daily. For more information contact the Provost Marshal's Office at 577-1461.

Vehicle: Green 1995 Dodge Neon Blue 1989 Subaru GL Red Honda Prelude Red Sea King Boat White Hydra Sports Boat Black VW Jetta License: CA/3KGZ374 CA/1REE135 NONE NONE FL/CZ639M NONE Vehicle: License:
Blue Mazda 626 CA/1STD385
Blue Ford Escort CA/3EKK843
Red Honda DX CA/2YBS381
Blue Ford Mustang CA/2TAX992
White Dodge Dart CA/SUPX39
Green Chevy Blazer CA/TESCROW